



217 Main Street • Hiram • GA • 30141
Phone (770) 943-3726 • Fax (770) 439-2372

*Mayor Doris A. Devey
Prather Rollins, Mayor Pro Tem*

Councilmembers

*Derrick Battle
Kathy Bookout*

*Teresa Philyaw
Kathy Carter*

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Public Relations/Media Inquiries:

Robbie Rokovitz
rokovitz@hiram-ga.us
217 Main Street
Hiram, GA 30144
770-943-3726 ext. 2016

Hiram Sergeant Earns an Expert Distinction

Hiram, Georgia – November 25, 2014 – The Hiram Police Department now has a Drug Recognition Expert on staff within its ranks. We are proud to announce that Sgt. Jesse Dunbar has been awarded certification as a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE).

A drug recognition expert or drug recognition evaluator (DRE) is a police officer trained to recognize impairment in drivers under the influence of drugs other than, or in addition to, alcohol. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) coordinates the International Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program with support from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation. In addition to officers, who are certified as DREs, the DECP educates prosecutors and judges in the prosecution of drugged drivers.

There is only about 270 DRE's statewide and counting Sgt. Dunbar, only two in Paulding County. This was a difficult certification to acquire. It required a commitment that spanned two years, hours of time dedicated to memorizing detailed matrices, and one week of field work. Sgt. Dunbar had to travel to Arizona to complete his field testing and competency review which he passed and received his certification. Sgt. Dunbar will be able to conduct interviews and perform assessments that will enable him to successfully prosecute DUI offenders who operate motor vehicles while under the influence of drugs.

When asked for comment, Chief Todd VandeZande stated, "As a result of this training, we will be able to improve our efforts directed toward removing impaired drivers from our roadways which may otherwise go undetected." "This achievement is a true testament to Sgt. Dunbar's expertise, proficiency and dedication to his profession which brings exceptional distinction to him and our department," continued Chief VandeZande.

For further information or details on the DRE certification or this award, you may contact Chief Todd VandeZande at 770-943-3726.

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